

METHODS OF IMPROVING WRITING SKILLS OF ESP STUDENTS THROUGH AUTHENTICITY IN TASK-BASED LANGUAGE TEACHING**Mirvokhidova Malika Khudoyor kizi**

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Abstract: The development of writing skills in English for Specific Purposes (ESP) has become one of the major priorities in modern language education. Researchers in applied linguistics emphasize that ESP learners require language competence connected directly to authentic professional communication and discipline-specific contexts. Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT) has been widely recognized as an effective learner-centered methodology because it integrates meaningful communication with practical language use. This article examines methods of improving ESP students' writing skills through authenticity in TBLT. The study analyzes theoretical foundations of authenticity, authentic materials, and task-based instruction in ESP writing classrooms. It also discusses how authentic tasks, real-world texts, collaborative activities, peer review, and genre-based writing practices contribute to the development of writing competence. The article is based on factual information from peer-reviewed studies and academic literature related to ESP, authentic materials, and TBLT. The findings indicate that authentic task-based instruction improves students' motivation, vocabulary acquisition, genre awareness, communicative competence, and academic writing performance. The article concludes that the integration of authentic materials and task-based methodologies creates an effective environment for developing ESP writing skills in higher education.

Keywords: ESP, Task-Based Language Teaching, authenticity, authentic materials, writing skills, communicative competence, academic writing, learner-centered instruction, genre-based writing, language acquisition

Introduction

English for Specific Purposes (ESP) focuses on teaching language according to learners' academic and professional needs. Researchers such as Hutchinson and Waters define ESP as an approach in which content and methods are based on learners' reasons for learning English. ESP courses are commonly designed for students in medicine, engineering, business, law, information technology, and other professional fields. The primary goal of ESP instruction is not only grammatical accuracy but also the ability to communicate effectively in real professional situations.

Writing is considered one of the most difficult language skills for ESP students because it requires lexical knowledge, grammatical competence, genre awareness, coherence, organization, and critical thinking. Academic and professional writing tasks demand accuracy and communicative appropriateness. Many ESP students experience difficulties in organizing ideas, using specialized vocabulary, and producing texts according to disciplinary conventions.

Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT) emerged from Communicative Language Teaching and became an important approach in second-language acquisition research. According to Rod Ellis, TBLT focuses primarily on meaning and requires learners to complete communicative tasks using language as a tool rather than studying isolated grammatical structures. TBLT encourages interaction, collaboration, and authentic communication.

Authenticity is one of the central principles of TBLT. Authenticity refers to the use of real-world language, materials, and communicative situations in the learning process. Gilmore states that authentic materials involve language produced by native speakers for real communicative purposes rather than for classroom instruction. In ESP education, authenticity is especially important because students need to perform professional tasks such as writing reports, emails, case studies, research papers, technical instructions, and business correspondence.

Modern research demonstrates that authentic tasks increase learners' motivation and improve communicative competence. Students become more engaged when classroom activities simulate real professional contexts. Therefore, integrating authenticity into task-based writing instruction is considered an effective method for improving ESP students' writing skills.

Methodology

This article is based on qualitative analysis of academic literature related to Task-Based Language Teaching, authenticity, ESP instruction, and writing pedagogy. The study examines peer-reviewed journal articles, books, conference proceedings, and educational research reports published by recognized scholars in applied linguistics and language education.

The methodological framework relies on content analysis of theoretical and empirical studies discussing authentic materials and task-based approaches in ESP writing classes. The collected sources were analyzed according to several categories:

- definitions of authenticity and authentic materials;
- theoretical principles of TBLT;
- characteristics of ESP writing instruction;
- classroom practices involving authentic tasks;
- effects of authentic materials on writing development;
- learner motivation and communicative competence.

The research also reviews studies discussing collaborative writing, genre-based instruction, and process writing within task-based environments. Particular attention was given to studies examining the effectiveness of authentic professional tasks in improving ESP students' academic and professional writing abilities.

Results

The analysis of the literature demonstrates that authenticity significantly contributes to the development of ESP students' writing skills in TBLT environments. Researchers identify several major factors explaining the effectiveness of authentic task-based instruction.

First, authentic materials expose learners to real language used in professional communication. These materials include business reports, research articles, technical manuals, emails, advertisements, contracts, case studies, and professional correspondence. Authentic texts help learners understand discipline-specific vocabulary, discourse patterns, and genre conventions.

Second, authentic task-based activities increase learner motivation. Students perceive classroom tasks as meaningful when they resemble real professional situations. According to TBLT theory, meaningful communication improves language acquisition because learners focus on achieving communicative goals rather than memorizing grammatical rules.

Third, collaborative writing tasks encourage interaction and peer learning. Group projects, peer editing, and cooperative problem-solving activities create opportunities for students to negotiate meaning and exchange feedback. Sociocultural theories of language learning emphasize that interaction supports language development through scaffolding and shared cognitive processes.

Fourth, authentic writing tasks improve genre awareness. ESP students learn how professional texts are structured and how language varies across contexts. For example, engineering students practice writing technical reports, while business students learn formal email communication and proposal writing. Exposure to authentic genres develops students' ability to produce contextually appropriate texts.

Research also shows that process-oriented writing tasks improve writing quality. TBLT often includes stages such as brainstorming, drafting, revising, editing, and peer review. These stages help students focus on organization, coherence, lexical choice, and accuracy. The integration of authentic tasks with process writing creates opportunities for continuous improvement.

Finally, authentic task-based instruction supports vocabulary acquisition. ESP learners encounter specialized terminology within realistic contexts, which improves retention and practical application. Vocabulary learning becomes more meaningful because students use terminology to complete communicative tasks rather than memorizing isolated word lists.

Analysis and Discussion

The effectiveness of authenticity in TBLT can be explained through several theoretical perspectives in language acquisition and communicative pedagogy. Communicative Language Teaching emphasizes that language is learned most effectively when used for meaningful interaction. TBLT extends this principle by organizing instruction around tasks that simulate real-world communication. In ESP classrooms, this principle becomes especially relevant because students need language for practical professional purposes.

Authentic materials play a significant role in bridging the gap between classroom learning and real-world communication. Traditional textbooks often simplify language and remove contextual complexity. In contrast, authentic materials expose learners to natural vocabulary, discourse structures, and communicative conventions. Researchers argue that authentic texts improve learners' pragmatic competence and cultural awareness because students encounter language in realistic contexts.

In ESP writing instruction, authenticity also contributes to genre competence. Genre-based pedagogy suggests that writing is socially situated and shaped by disciplinary expectations. Students must understand not only grammar but also the rhetorical structures and conventions of professional communication. Authentic task-based instruction allows learners to analyze real professional texts and produce similar documents.

For example, medical students may write patient reports and case summaries, engineering students may prepare technical documentation, and business students may create marketing proposals or formal correspondence. Such tasks develop students' awareness of audience, purpose, style, and organization. Authentic writing activities therefore support both linguistic competence and professional identity formation.

Another important aspect is learner motivation. Motivation is strongly connected to relevance and meaningfulness in language learning. Studies indicate that learners participate more actively when tasks reflect their academic or career goals. TBLT enhances intrinsic motivation because tasks require students to solve problems, exchange information, and complete meaningful objectives. Authentic professional scenarios make language learning practical and purposeful.

Collaborative learning is another essential component of authentic TBLT instruction. Pair work and group activities encourage learners to share ideas and provide peer feedback. Interaction during collaborative tasks promotes negotiation of meaning, which is considered beneficial for second-language acquisition. Students often learn vocabulary, organizational strategies, and genre conventions through peer communication and cooperative writing processes.

Technology has also increased opportunities for authentic ESP writing instruction. Online communication platforms, digital forums, email exchanges, and professional networking sites provide realistic contexts for writing practice. Students can participate in simulated professional communication using authentic digital environments. This integration of technology supports multimodal literacy and prepares learners for modern workplace communication.

Despite its advantages, authentic task-based instruction also presents challenges. Authentic materials may contain complex vocabulary and difficult structures that exceed students' proficiency levels. Teachers therefore need to select materials carefully according to learners' linguistic abilities and professional needs. Another challenge involves assessment. Traditional grammar-focused assessment methods may not accurately evaluate communicative effectiveness in authentic writing tasks.

Teacher preparation is also important for successful implementation of authenticity in TBLT. Educators need training in task design, material adaptation, and communicative assessment.

Effective task-based instruction requires careful planning to ensure that tasks align with learning objectives and professional contexts.

Nevertheless, the advantages of authenticity in ESP writing instruction are supported by substantial research. Authentic tasks create meaningful learning experiences, encourage interaction, and improve students' confidence in professional communication. The integration of authenticity with TBLT reflects current trends in learner-centered and communicative language teaching.

Conclusion

The integration of authenticity into Task-Based Language Teaching provides significant benefits for improving ESP students' writing skills. Authentic materials and real-world communicative tasks help learners develop practical writing competence relevant to their academic and professional fields. Research demonstrates that authentic task-based instruction improves motivation, genre awareness, vocabulary acquisition, communicative competence, and collaborative learning.

ESP students benefit from exposure to realistic professional texts because such materials reflect actual language use within specific disciplines. Task-based activities encourage meaningful communication and help students apply language in practical contexts. Collaborative writing, peer review, and process-oriented instruction further contribute to the development of writing proficiency.

Although authentic task-based instruction requires careful planning and appropriate material selection, its advantages outweigh its challenges. The use of authentic tasks creates a dynamic and learner-centered environment in which students actively participate in meaningful communication. Therefore, authenticity should be considered a central principle in ESP writing pedagogy and curriculum development.

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